

Derby & District Organists' Association

Registered Charity No. 510567

Newsletter



Chapel Challenge - Laurence Rogers

Our March meeting, organised by our Chairman, Alex Binns, was a visit to Trent College, Long Eaton, to see, hear and play the Nigel Church organ in the chapel. Alex introduced the Director of Music, Nicholas Parrans-Smith, who described how the Music Department was springing back to life after the fallow period of Covid restrictions. Regarding the organ in the school chapel, Alex was on home turf as a regular player for chapel services and in his role providing tuition for pupils.

The instrument by Nigel Church, installed in 1976, is totally mechanical and, like other organs by this builder in our area, its tonal scheme takes inspiration from the neo-classical genre that held sway during that period. Speaking into a spacious acoustic of the chapel, this is an instrument that is rewarding for the listener, but a challenge for the player. The second manual division is located at just above the player's eye level, making the differentiation between the loudness of the two manual divisions quite extreme, an effect tempered somewhat by closing the expression shutters, but generally requiring great

DDOA Meetings

Wednesday 24th May

Visit organs in Halifax Minster and Bradford Cathedral (See page 4)

Tuesday 27th June at 7.30 pm Hazelwood Parish Church

'800 Years On' - Celebrating the Anniversaries of Thomas Weelkes, William H Monk and John B Dykes
Presentation by Margaret Eades and Richard Brice (See page 4)

Other Events

Mondays 1.00 - 1.40 pm

Lunchtime Music at St Anne's, Derby

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|-----------------------|---|
| 8 th May | Paul Hale (organ) |
| 15 th May | Lundi String Quartet |
| 22 nd May | David Butterworth (organ) |
| 29 th May | Caroline Summers (contralto)
David Charlston (piano) |
| 5 th June | Gillian von Fragstein (soprano)
Natalie Windsor (soprano)
Peter Glenville (clarinet)
Beate Toyka (piano) |
| 12 th June | TBA |
| 19 th June | Quintessential (wind quintet) |
| 26 th June | Richard Roddis (tenor)
Beate Toyka (piano) |

Bank Holiday Monday 8th May 1.00 pm

Derby Cathedral
Come play the Cathedral Organ

Ascension Day Thursday 18th May

6.15 pm Derby Cathedral
L'Ascension (Messiaen) Alexander Binns

Thursdays 12.15 - 1.00 pm

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|----------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Chesterfield Parish Church | |
| 4 th May | Peter Shepherd (Chesterfield) |
| 11 th May | Mary Cobbold (Sheffield) |
| 18 th May | Derek Grover (Ranmoor) |
| 25 th May | Eric Singleton (Unstone) |
| 1 st June | Nigel Gotteri (Dronfield) |
| 8 th June | Alexander Binns (Derby) |
| 15 th June | David Butterworth (Nottingham) |
| 22 nd June | Christopher Black (Chesterfield) |
| 29 th June | Peter Shepherd (Chesterfield) |

Wednesdays 12.30 - 1.10 pm

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| Lunchtime Recitals at St Modwen's, Burton-upon-Trent | |
| 7 th June | Ewan Murray |
| 14 th June | John Keys |
| 21 st June | Angela Sones |
| 28 th June | Peter Morris and Jane Eminson - (organ and flute) |

Photo: Trent College Chapel organ with Chris Darrall

care in the judgement of balance. In particular, the Cymbel mixture was voiced so high and bright that rendered it painfully shrill for the player. As anticipated, our small group of players found Bach and Baroque repertoire most satisfying, but Denis Littleton also showed that the variety of tone colours were well suited to some contemporary pieces by Jesper Madsen, a Danish composer. The clarity of sound was never in doubt and the 16 foot pedal reed was a valuable asset to the full ensemble, especially with a *cantus firmus* in the pedal.

In general the keyboard touch was beginning to show its age, feeling rather loose and demanding discipline of the player. For a modern mechanical instrument that usually promises an intimacy of touch, this was a bit disappointing, but a long-deserved overhaul will probably rectify this.

Our visit was worthwhile; we enjoyed friendly conversation and could play as long as we wished. Our thanks are to Alex for making the arrangements and to Nick for making us so welcome.

Laurence Rogers

Trent College Chapel Organ by Nigel Church, 1976

Manual I		Pedal	
Chimney Flute	8	Subbass	16
Principal	4	Principal	8
Wald Flute	4	Fagot	16
Mixture	III		
Trumpet	8		
Manual II		Couplers	
Gedeckt	8	Manual I to Pedal	
Koppel Flute	4	Manual II to Pedal	
Octave	2	Manual II to Manual I	
Quint	1 1/3		
Cymbel	II		

Recent Event

BIOS Research Conference

John Norman has published numerous articles in the organ literature, including *Organists' Review*. As a former organ builder (his father was Herbert Norman, of Hill, Norman and Beard fame), his articles have always carried great authority.

At the recent Research Conference of the British Institute of Organ Studies (BIOS), John presented a paper revealing some of the secrets of the art of the pipe voicer. He pointed out that the most publicised design information about an organ stop has been the width of pipes (scale) and wind pressure. These are determined by the organ designer, but a crucial parameter, the 'cut-up', is left to the pipe voicer. This is a secret weapon which, as John went on to explain, has profound influence on the overall tone of an organ.

Cut-up is the distance between the upper and lower lips of the pipe mouth; it takes its name from the action of the voicer, shaving metal from the upper lip with a sharp tool. It is the most important of voicer decisions. Henry Willis always set the cut-up for middle C pipes personally and attached a signed label to the pipe.

As wind emerges from the slot at the lower lip, it vibrates either side of the top lip creating an 'edge tone'. The amount of cut-up determines the natural pitch of this tone which is very much higher than

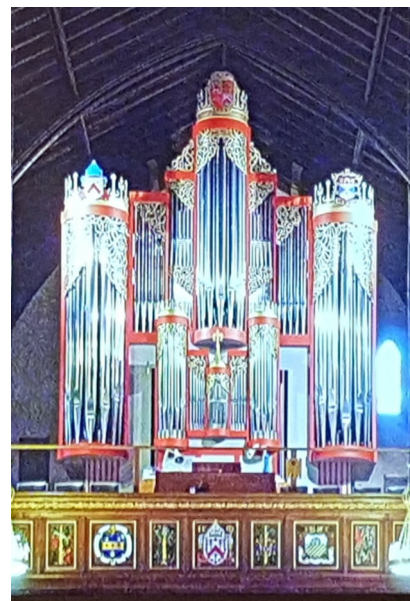


the speaking note of the pipe, being controlled by the much greater mass of air in the pipe body. The presence of the edge tone influences the tone quality of the speaking note. It's intensity may be reduced by 'nicking' (see [Newsletter 93](#), page 4), but it remains a significant contributor to the mix of harmonics in the pipe's sound, together with the 'scale' (diameter) of the pipe.

So, considering that the voicer is given a pipe whose scale is already fixed, how does he choose the amount of cut-up required? Experience shows that a lower cut-up produces a sound more suited to a dry acoustic. Exploring the effect of the acoustic of a building, its importance becomes evident: a long reverberation absorbs treble frequencies such as those generated by edge tones, whereas spaces with a short reverberation leave such tones exposed.

A German builder once remarked on how Holdich frequently used low cut-ups. It happens that Holdich mostly built for small unreverberant churches. Unfortunately, low cut-ups became a habit and when he built an organ for Lichfield cathedral in 1860, it was thought inadequate, only to be replaced by Hill 24 years later. More recently, an opposite

example occurred at St Salvator's Chapel, University of St Andrews; the Austrian organ builder, used to medieval abbeys, failed to take account of a reverberation of only 1.25 seconds due to sound absorption by roof boards. The result is an organ with an exceptionally aggressive sound.



St Salvator's Chapel. Organ by Hradetzky, 1973

To sum up, the cut-up is the voicer's secret weapon:

- A low cut-up gives a 'sweet' but non-aggressive sound, suitable for intimate and non-reverberant venues.
- A higher cut-up gives a 'harder' sound which seems better able to cut through in a larger and more reverberant environment.

That is why some organ builders were more successful in large buildings and others in smaller, less reverberant, buildings.

Laurence Rogers, based on the talk by John Norman, 25th February.

The Organist Succession at St Sulpice, Paris - John Maxwell-Jones

The retirement, or semi-retirement of Maître **Daniel Roth** was announced in February 2023 and he was named "emeritus". On his recommendation, a successor as *co-titulaire* has been announced, (joining **Sophie-Véronique Cauchefer-Choplin** already *co-titulaire*): **Karol Mossakowski** was born in 1990, and trained both in Poland and as a prize-winning student of the Paris Conservatoire where his teachers included Olivier Latry, Michel Bouvard, Thierry Escaich and Philippe Lefebvre. He is a laureate in the 2016 Grand-Prix de Chartres in improvisation. Since 2017 he has been *titulaire* of the Grand-orgue in Lille. Daniel Roth will continue to play once a month for the 10.00 am recital and the 11.00 Messe, a tradition that has existed since at least the time of his famous predecessor, Charles-Marie Widor.

The *grand orgue* of Saint-Sulpice as we know and love it dates from 1862 when the celebrated Aristide Cavaillé-Coll rebuilt and considerably enlarged the 1776 Clicquot instrument. Its first *titulaire* was the famous, or for some infamous, **Louis Lefébure-Wély** who remained in post until his death in 1869. His improvisations attracted many organ lovers including his successor at *La Madeleine*, Camille Saint-Saëns, who is on record as saying he was a marvellous improviser but left only insignificant organ pieces.



Louis Lefébure-Wély



Daniel Roth



Karol Mossakowski

Charles-Marie Widor was his successor and held the post for an amazing 64 years (1870 - 1934). His appointment was greatly encouraged by Aristide Cavaillé-Coll. He was provisionally appointed in 1870 but never granted tenure, surely the longest temporary appointment on record! (The confusion was in fact caused by the disruption to normal life by the Franco-Prussian War). "If I had not experienced the seduction of these timbres, the mystical charge of this sound wave, I would not have written organ music" he wrote. To thank him for his 64 years of service, the parish offered him two pedal stops: a principal of 32' and a principal of 16': the great organ thus increased to 102 stops.

Marcel Dupré was appointed, with Widor's blessing, in 1934 and held the post until his death in 1971. Already Widor's substitute in 1906 and 1907, Widor chose Dupré to succeed him in 1933.

A less popular appointment was that of **Jean-Jacques Grunenwald** (1973 - 1982) He was a deputy for Dupré in whose class he got the first organ prize in 1934, but Dupré had reservations about the compositions of his disciple. Second-prize winner of the Prix de Rome, he was titular of the Cavaillé-Coll of Saint-Pierre de Montrouge (Paris) before being appointed to Saint-Sulpice.

Various reasons left the official post of *titulaire* vacant until Daniel



Sophie Véronique Cauchefer-Choplin

Roth's appointment in 1985. Born in 1942, he was a student of Maurice Duruflé, Marcel Bistch and Rolande Falcinelli at the Conservatoire. When he was appointed to Saint-Sulpice, he moved from the *grand-orgue* of Sacré-Coeur de Montmartre where he was succeeded by Naji Hakim.

The demands on the *titulaires* as international recitalists are such that the decision was taken to appoint an official assistant.

Sophie-Véronique Cauchefer-Choplin was born in 1959 and obtained first prizes in organ and improvisation in Rolande Falcinelli's class. She was *titulaire* of the organ of Saint-Jean-Baptiste de-la-Salle in Paris from 1983 until 2013 and became *co-titulaire* of Saint-Sulpice in 1985.

The wonderful continuity of organists is one of the reasons that the instrument is very much as Cavaillé-Coll left it at the end of his life, one of the greatest glories of 19th French organ building.

John Maxwell-Jones



Dupré (left) Widor (right)

Forthcoming DDOA Meetings

Wednesday 24th May - Visit to Organs in Halifax and Bradford

10.30 am – Halifax Minster **HX1 1QL**

The present organ configuration dates from 1929 when Harrison and Harrison re-built the instrument containing much historical pipework dating back to John Snetzler. It retains its tubular pneumatic mechanism from 1929. There are four manuals and 52 stops. [Specification](#)

12.30 pm – Lunch at Bradford Cathedral **BD1 4EH**

1.00 pm – Recital at Bradford Cathedral

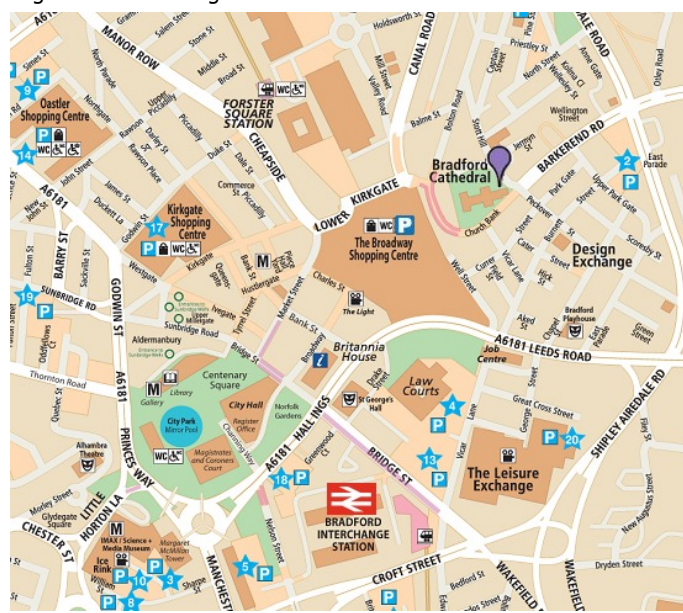
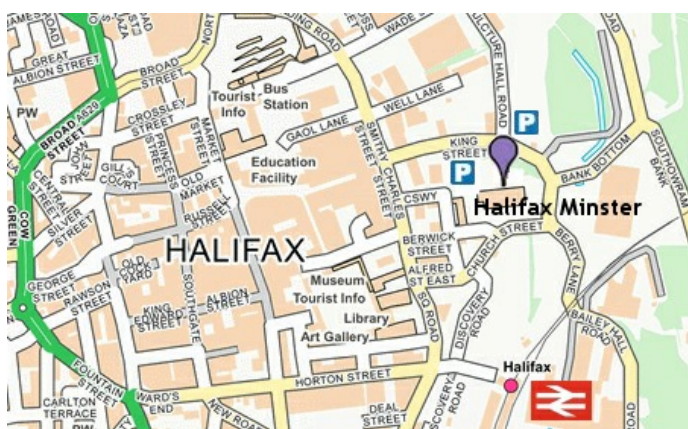
The 1961 organ was built by *Hill, Norman and Beard* in an "American Classic" style, and was designed to play music of any era and genre. The organ was revoiced and extended in 1977 by *J W Walker*. [Specification](#)

2.00 pm – Members play Cathedral organ

Participation and travel

Members are asked to travel independently. Both venues are no more than 10 minutes walk from a main railway station. For car travel, at Halifax there are two public car parks close by in addition to street parking. At Bradford there is no available street parking, but parking in the Broadway Shopping Centre is recommended.

If you need a lift or have spare places to offer other members, please contact Alex Binns at DDOAchairman@gmail.com. In any event, **please let Alex know that you wish to attend**; this will be helpful in notifying members of any last minute changes to the arrangements.



Tuesday 27th June at Hazelwood Parish Church 7.30 pm

800 Years On

Celebrating the Anniversaries of Thomas Weelkes, William H Monk and John B Dykes



J B Dykes

Presented by Margaret Eades and Richard Brice

Thomas Weelkes died 400 years ago and William Henry Monk and John Bacchus Dykes were each born 200 years ago. All composed substantial and lasting contributions to church music: anthems, madrigals, organ music and hymnody. Margaret and Richard will celebrate the composers and their works in a varied programme. We are promised a mix of live and recorded music together with some audience participation. There will be an interval for refreshments.

From Derby, take the A6 to Duffield and look for the left turn to Hazelwood DE56 4AL. There is ample road parking space adjacent to the church.



W H Monk

Items of news or articles for the July / August edition of the *Newsletter* should reach the Editor by **Monday 26th June**, either via e-mail: DDOAnews@gmail.com or by post: Dr Laurence Rogers, 24 St.David's Crescent, Coalville, Leicestershire LE67 4SS. The Secretary, Andy Storer, may be reached via mail@derbyorganists.co.uk. Please visit the DDOA Website www.derbyorganists.co.uk for information about Association activities, past editions of the newsletter, photo gallery and many special features of local interest.

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